

POST-GRADUATE COURSE FOR NATIONAL HEALTH INSURANCE PRACTITIONERS

At the request of the Ministry of Labour (N.I.), a post-graduate course in medicine and surgery for National Health Insurance Practitioners was held in conjunction with the clinical staffs of the Royal Victoria and Mater Infirmorum Hospitals, Belfast, and with the pre-clinical Medical School of Queen's University, in September, 1933. So successful was this course that the Ministry of Labour (N.I.) again requested the organization of a similar course in 1934. This course was arranged for the second fortnight in September, and some forty-eight practitioners attended.

The morning sessions of the course were devoted to the clinical examination of patients, and to discussions on the diagnosis of the different cases and on the course of treatment to be followed. The afternoon sessions consisted of lectures and demonstrations on pathology, bacteriology, and biochemistry as applied to the diagnosis and treatment of diseases, and to discussions on public health problems, particularly those affecting rural communities. It also included two valuable discussions, led by Dr. James Boyd, the Ministry's Chief Medical Officer, on the working of the National Health Insurance Act as applied to Northern Ireland.

Attendance on such a course is of very great value to the busy practitioner, and focuses his attention on the relative values of the more useful of the newer methods of diagnosis and treatment. It enables him to see and study at first hand the practice and results of these methods, and thus help to keep the standard of his practice up to date, so that he can be of the greatest possible assistance to the community in the control of disease and in guarding the health of the people under his charge.

Before the formal lectures and demonstrations began, Professor R. M. Henry, Acting Vice-Chancellor, Queen's University, Belfast, delivered an inaugural address to the members of the class, in the Institute of Pathology of Queen's University. This address was very cordially received and much appreciated by the members present. Professor Henry began by extending a welcome to all the members of the class to the Medical School of Queen's, and then dwelt briefly on the importance and advantages of post-graduate refresher courses such as that on which they were about to take part in the University, the Royal Victoria and the Mater Infirmorum Hospitals. He trusted that the time thus spent by them would be profitable not only to them as medical practitioners, but to the many patients who had entrusted their lives to them.

The organization of the programme and the general arrangements for the course were in the hands of Dr. R. H. Hunter, who acted as guide and cicerone to the members during the whole period which it lasted.